



April 8, 2019

Key Vote NO on the “Investing for the People Act,” H.R. 2021

On behalf of FreedomWorks’ activist community, I urge you to contact your representative and urge him or her to vote NO on the “Investing for the People Act,” H.R. 2021. Introduced by Rep. John Yarmuth (D-Ky.), H.R. 2021, which should be called the “Bankrupting the People Act,” would bust the discretionary spending caps by \$360.8 billion relative to current law over two fiscal years.

In February 2018, the Republican-controlled Congress, with the help of Democrats, passed the Bipartisan Budget Act, which busted the discretionary spending caps by \$296 billion over two fiscal years, 2018 and 2019. This was the fourth time that Congress has busted the spending caps established by the Budget Control Act of 2011.¹ As we noted in our key vote, the Bipartisan Budget Act was irresponsible and a betrayal of the fiscally conservative principles in which Republicans claim to believe.

At the time the Bipartisan Budget Act was passed, we warned that it could “establish a new baseline for federal spending, drowning taxpayers and future generations with red ink simply because Congress lacks the political will to do the right thing.” Because congressional Republicans, even many purported fiscal conservatives, couldn’t restrain themselves from voting for higher discretionary spending levels, House Democrats, who quite literally don’t care about budget deficits, want another deal on discretionary spending caps for FY 2020 and FY 2021.

Under current law, the discretionary spending caps for FY 2020 and FY 2021 are projected to be \$1.214 trillion and \$1.241 trillion,² according to the Congressional Budget Office (CBO).³ H.R. 2021 would increase the discretionary spending caps to \$1.396 trillion in FY 2020 and \$1.420 trillion in FY 2021, a total increase of \$360.8 billion over the two fiscal years covered by the bill compared to current law.

¹ The discretionary spending caps established by the Budget Control Act of 2011 were amended in the American Taxpayer Relief Act of 2013, the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013, the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2015, and the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018.

² These figures include slush fund spending through the Overseas Contingency Operations fund, which isn’t subject to sequestration spending limits. This allows Congress to spend at levels above the discretionary spending caps.

³ Congressional Budget Office, “H.R 2021, Investing for the People Act,” April 4, 2019 https://www.cbo.gov/system/files/2019-04/hr2021_0.pdf

H.R. 2021 also increases spending for the 2020 Census by \$7.5 billion. In August 2018, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) noted that the Census Bureau “estimated the total cost of the redesigned 2020 Census to be about \$15.6 billion, more than \$3 billion higher than it estimated in October 2015.”⁴ The 2020 Census is already the most expensive in history.

Once again, House Democrats are using a misleading phrase for the short title of a terrible bill they’re bringing to the floor. The so-called “Investing for the People Act” will increase budget deficits and leave America’s children and grandchildren with more debt. Of course, House Democrats won’t blame higher spending levels for the increase in budget deficits and debt; they’ll wrongly blame the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act.

Democrats and Republicans alike are to blame for busting the spending caps and increasing budget deficits, but this fiscal insanity must end. H.R. 2021 must not be allowed to become law. For those Republicans who betrayed the fiscally conservative principles that they claim to hold, a vote against H.R. 2021 represents a chance reestablish at least some of the trust they lost when they voted for the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018.

FreedomWorks will count the vote on the Investing for the People Act, H.R. 2021, when calculating our Scorecard for 2019 and reserves the right to score any amendments and weight any votes. The scorecard is used to determine eligibility for the FreedomFighter Award, which recognizes members of the House and Senate who consistently vote to support economic freedom and individual liberty.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A. Brandon', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Adam Brandon
President, FreedomWorks

⁴ Government Accountability Office, “2020 Census: Continued Management Attention Needed to Address Challenges and Risks with Developing, Testing, and Securing IT Systems,” August 2018 <https://www.gao.gov/assets/700/694169.pdf>